

DCI REMARKS TO THE SOCIETY OF SPONSORS OF THE U.S. NAVY

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Mrs. Kelley, sponsors of Navy ships, admirals, generals, ladies and gentlemen.

I can't tell you how nice it is for the first time after fifteen months, to be back at a strictly Navy and Marine Corps event. And what a nice one for it to be; an event celebrating the 70th anniversary of this wonderful society, dedicated to those sinews of United States naval strength, the ships of our fleet. Mrs. Kelley, on behalf of all of us in the Navy here, I do want to congratulate you and your ladies and thank you for all the support you give to the United States Navy through this wonderful society. We are very, very thankful to you.

I said it has been fifteen months since I've really been at a truly naval event. By coincidence it was fifteen months ago this morning that I was called to the President's office and told that I was in effect about to leave the naval profession and become chief of the Central Intelligence Agency. My reaction was to say, Mr. President, do you realize that for thirty years I've been trying my best to be a good, clean, straightforward, simple naval officer. And now you are going to send me down to where I'll always be remembered as the number one spook. Actually, while it was difficult, a difficult wrench, to pull up my naval roots and transplant them into the intelligence community because of my love for the Navy, it's been a very challenging, stimulating fifteen months. The transition really was not difficult because in the professionals of the intelligence community of our country, we are blessed to have the same high standards of professionalism as we all know in our Navy. We

are also blessed to have that same dedication to our country and its causes.

It's different being a spook, but when I thought about what you might want to hear today, I suddenly appreciated how much spooks and sponsors had in common. Now you may not believe that or you may not even like that, but let me explain. It goes to a wonderful sea story and I can tell sea stories here, as I can't on a normal platform. You see, so many people believe that we in the intelligence business have almost supernatural powers and that we bring things together with great precision and everything works with perfection. Let me explain to you that so much is coincidence and happenstance. Giving you an example from a sea story, three years ago next month I went in a cruiser from Albany to Boston to play host to two Russian destroyers, one with an admiral embarked, that came over for a visit to this country. Pat and I took this admiral around Boston for four or five days; we had a splendid time. One event was the laying of a wreath on the Boston Common one morning. We did this and when it was over I thought I'd test this admiral and see if he had flexibility and response to things that weren't programmed in advance. We had a couple of hours on the schedule that were free, so I said to him, there is a marvelous museum, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, just across the Commons, admiral, would you like to go to it? And he said, "Ya". So, we drove to the museum and wouldn't you know, it didn't open til 1:00 o'clock. So, I tested him further. I said, I'm very sorry but just on the other side is the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and it's a magnificent institution - "Ya" - so we went and lo and behold we walked in the door and the big sign said "Special Exhibit in Honor of Paul Revere." We went up and here was Paul Revere's big silver bowl. Little did the admiral know that Patricia had already had a reproduction of a Paul Revere bowl

engraved with the admiral's name on it and we presented it to him that evening. Now he didn't think that was a coincidence and after he found out that I later became a spook, he surely doesn't think that was coincidence.

Now, as for sponsors, let me say that I don't think you work by coincidence. I think you work by supernatural design because last September I received a lovely letter from Mrs. Kelley inviting me to be here eight months later and as I was reflecting on this privilege, this honor that was coming, and asking could I make that commitment without danger of having to break it for an overseas trip for some purpose when it was that far in advance; I opened my mail that day and what's in it? A letter from the Secretary of the Navy inviting my wife to become a sponsor. Now you can't convince me that was a coincidence any more than that Russian Admiral believed it.

My job today, on behalf of all of you, is to ensure that the intelligence activities of our country are not done by coincidence or happenstance, but are deliberately planned to the benefit of our country. This is a particularly exciting time in intelligence in this country because we are evolving what I call a new American, a uniquely American model of intelligence. Let me give you four indicators of what I mean as a new model.

First, our product, what we are trying to provide to the country's leaders, is different today than it has been in the past. Thirty years ago when we first formed a Central Intelligence Agency our overriding concern was intelligence on Soviet military activities, and well it should have been. Today that is still an overriding concern, but look at how much the world has changed in those thirty years; and how much more diverse our national interests, our contacts, our dependency on other nations is today than it was thirty years ago. Today we are not economically

independent as we were thirty years ago. We have to understand the economic processes in other countries or we will lose our shirt in the market place. Today we do not dominate the world political scene in the same way we did thirty years ago when so many countries just followed our lead. They're very independent today and properly so. But, this means we must understand their politics, their culture, their aspirations, their plans. We must have good intelligence in the economic and in the political spheres and we must be concerned with much more than just the Soviet Union and its adjacent satellites. I don't want to overstate this--the number one priority for American intelligence must continue to be the Soviet military threat. But we must today face a challenge of expanding our horizons, looking at a much wider geographical area and a much more diverse set of topics. Not only economics and politics but terrorism, counter-terrorism of course; drugs, drug flow around the world; nuclear proliferation problems; all kinds of new topics that require new skills, new disciplines, and it's a very important and exciting challenge to make this adjustment, this expansion really, of our product line. Not only is our product changing, but so too is our production line.

Historically, the production line of intelligence has been the human intelligence agent--the spy. Do you remember that Joshua sent two of them into Jericho before he marched around with his trumpets. And ever since then that has been the primary production element of intelligence. At least, until a decade and a half or so ago, when we began to see a revolution in the way we collect intelligence information. This country, with its vast technological capabilities, has developed technical means of collecting information about foreign activities that surpass our wildest imaginations of a decade ago; and today funnel into us such great

quantities of information that one of our real challenges is how to digest it, sift it, understand it, store it, and utilize it. Interestingly, the more this psychological revolution takes over, the more at the same time we continue to need the services of the human intelligence agent, the spy. Why? Because when I take a lot of this technically derived information and I present it to one of our decision makers, generally speaking the reaction is likely to be: Stan, why did that happen, or what is going to happen next? And these technical systems generally tell you what happened yesterday but not tomorrow. That, of course--finding out people's intentions--is the forte of the traditional spy. So what is different today and what gives us the great challenge, is that we don't have a single production line anymore, we have to have well-oiled and integrated machinery. We must be able to mesh the technical and the human means, we must be able to ask ourselves what does the technical not tell us, can we fill that gap with the human; or what does the human leave out and can we find it through these technical means. It's a different process, an exciting one, to try to bring it into harmonious motion so that we don't overlap too much, we don't underlap, but we do get the job done with all these marvelous assets that are available to us.

Now my third characteristic of the new American model of intelligence, one which affects you directly, is a policy of much greater openness. Traditionally, all intelligence organizations have operated on a basis of maximum secrecy and minimum disclosure. While that was the case, today, not only in this country but I perceive it all around the free world, that policy is no longer satisfactory. It is no longer satisfactory in this country in particular because we have just emerged from three years of intense public criticism and scrutiny of our intelligence process. Now I do not believe that any public institution can survive in our country

unless it has the basic support of the American public. Up until three years ago, understandably and properly, the American public supported our intelligence institutions on faith. But since we have had this questioning, this scrutiny, and this criticism, I don't think that will satisfy the American public any longer nor would it give us the support we need in order to maintain that public support which is essential to our continuation. So today we are opening up more. When we do a classified study, you look on the top and it's labeled up there, secret, or top secret, or destroy before reading; we ask ourselves, if we take out of that the information which tells how we got that information--and which would then maybe prevent our getting it again--or that factual data which is valuable to our decision makers because it is uniquely theirs; or it is a real advantage if they have it and other decision makers around the world do not. If we take those factors out, is there enough left to be of value to the American public. If there is, we publish it, as we did over two times a week this past year, and make it available to you. We hope this will help to improve the quality of American debate on important topics.

Well you might ask, how far can you go with this without endangering the intelligence process itself. There's no question that we must maintain a great deal of secrecy in our intelligence. There are things you simply cannot do if they are known in advance. So I have a conviction that by publishing as much as we can in unclassified form, we can better protect what remains. The greatest danger to security of information in our government today is the surfeit of classified information that is in the government's safes. The result is today that people do not respect the classified label. And I hope that by reducing the corpus of classified information to a minimum to generate greater respect for that which must remain classified. We have reached a point in our country where the lack

of respect for the government's decision to classify something has gone much too far. These people who are publishing books, writing articles and taking it unto themselves to decide whether that material is classified or not; who make arguments in the courts--just two days ago--to the effect that they knew there was nothing classified in their book and therefore they did not need to submit it for review, have missed the point and that is that it is only we in the positions of proper authority who can judge what must be classified or not. The logical extension of this current theory, current tendency to praise those who blow whistles, so to speak, is that any one of us--any one of us 215 million Americans--has the right to decide what the government should keep classified and what it should not. Now I don't ask that you take this purely on faith, that we know what is best to be kept secret and what is not, but I point to the fourth characteristic of the American model of intelligence and that is greater oversight.

Out of this crucible of three years of public criticism, we have now forged an oversight process that serves as a check on the entire intelligence system. Clearly, as I have said, we must retain a great body of secrecy and therefore we cannot have public oversight--full public oversight. We can tell you as much as possible but we certainly cannot tell you everything. So what do we have? We have generated instead what I call surrogate public oversight. And the first surrogate is the President, the second the Vice President and they keep very close track on us and they are kept well informed and give me the time to let them know what we are doing in the intelligence world. The next surrogate is a board created in February of 1976 called the Intelligence Oversight Board: three men--Governor Scranton, Senator Gore, and Mr. Tom Farmer of Washington--appointed by the President with a responsibility only to overview the

activities, the legality and the propriety of what the intelligence community is doing. They report only to the President and any one of you, any one of my employees, can go right to them and say, that fellow Turner is really off the track, you ought to look into it. They will. They will report to the President whether something should be done with Turner. The third area of oversight is a committee in the Senate and a corresponding committee in the House dedicated only to the intelligence function. This has not existed before. We have had the Senate Committee now for just two years, the House Committee for just a little less than a year. The process is working very well. They are asking us good questions. They are keeping us on our toes. At the same time they are providing strength to us because we do have a group of people in the Congress who know enough about our activities to understand them and to support us where we need it with the other members and with the public.

Now I would not be candid with you if I did not say there were also risks in this policy of greater oversight. There is first the risk there will be leaks. It's my view there's a vacant wall which says, the possibility of a secret leaking is geometrically proportional to the number of people who know it. Whether they're Congressmen, or CIA officers, or naval officers, or anybody else makes no difference, the law is one of geometry. But if we have too much disclosure to the oversight committee, and there is too much leaking, then we will have intelligence by timidity. We will be unwilling to take risks, we will be unwilling to do things that need to be done for fear they will have to be disclosed and then they will be leaked. Peoples lives could be lost, expensive technical systems can be compromised. We are new enough in this oversight process that I cannot guarantee you today that we will steer in the right course between enough oversight and not too much leak or timidity. I am confident



that we are going to find that right path, we are on it today, we are not stopping from telling the Congress too much. But it will be, I would suggest, another year or maybe two before these procedures are worked out and we really have a full confidence that this oversight process will be a net plus. I am confident it can be, I am confident we are moving in that direction and I sincerely believe it will be as we work this process out with the Congress of the United States. Today there is no question in my mind that the intelligence services of the United States of America are number one in the world. I assure you that I am doing everything I can and always will to keep it just that way.

Thank you.